

What is claimed is:

1. A vehicle control system comprising:

means for controlling a running condition of a vehicle by setting a target control amount based on a distance from and relative speed with respect to an object present ahead of the vehicle and accelerating or decelerating the vehicle according to the target control amount;

means for performing control for avoiding a collision with the object if the collision cannot be avoided by the control performed by the running condition control means; and

means for canceling an operation mode for allowing the running condition control means to perform control if control by the collision avoiding control means is activated when the operation mode is active.

2. The vehicle control system according to claim 1, wherein

the target control amount is a target acceleration;

the running condition control means performs control with the target acceleration limited to a limit acceleration that is preset to a negative value if the target acceleration is smaller than the limit acceleration;

the collision avoiding control means performs control with an avoidance acceleration that is smaller than the limit acceleration at least at the start of activation thereof; and

the avoidance acceleration is set such that a perceivable difference to the driver is generated between

behaviors of the vehicle during control by the running condition control means and during control by the collision avoiding control means.

3. A vehicle control system comprising:

means for controlling a running condition of a vehicle by setting a target acceleration based on a distance from and relative speed with respect to an object ahead of the running vehicle and accelerating or decelerating the vehicle according to the target acceleration; and

means for performing control for avoiding collision if a collision with the object cannot be avoided by the control performed by the running condition control means, wherein

the running condition control means performs actual control with the target acceleration limited to a limit acceleration that is preset to a negative value if the target acceleration is smaller than the limit acceleration;

the collision avoiding control means performs control with an avoidance acceleration that is smaller than the limit acceleration at least at the start of the control; and

the avoidance acceleration is set such that a perceivable difference to the driver is generated between behaviors of the vehicle during control by the running condition control means and during control by the collision avoiding control means.

4. The vehicle control system according to claim 3,

wherein the difference between the limit acceleration and the avoidance acceleration is at least one-tenth of gravity's acceleration.

5. The vehicle control system according to claim 4, further comprising:

alarm means for generating an alarm when the possibility is high that the collision avoiding control means is activated.

6. The vehicle control system according to claim 5, further comprising:

means for inhibiting operation of the collision avoiding control means if a specified operation indicating that no control by the collision avoiding control means is necessary is detected in a period after activation of the alarm means and before activation of the collision avoiding control means.

7. A vehicle control system comprising:

means for controlling a running condition of a vehicle by setting a target control amount based on a distance from and relative speed with respect to an object present ahead of the vehicle and accelerating or decelerating the vehicle according to the target control amount;

means for performing control for avoiding collision if a collision with the object cannot be avoided by the control performed by the running condition control means;

means for generating an alarm when the possibility is high

that the collision avoiding control means is activated; and
means for inhibiting operation of the collision avoiding control means if a specified operation indicating that no control by the collision avoiding control means is necessary is detected in a period after activation of the alarm means and before activation of the collision avoiding control means.

8. The vehicle control system according to claim 6, wherein the specified operation is an operation of an accelerator pedal or a specified switch.

9. The vehicle control system according to claim 5, further comprising:

second inhibiting means for inhibiting operation of the collision avoiding control means when the possibility is low that the object is a vehicle or when an object detecting device exhibits low detecting accuracy.

10. The vehicle control system according to claim 9, further comprising:

means for enabling operation of the collision avoiding control means only when an object, a collision with which is to be avoided, has been an object of control by the running condition control means for a preset monitoring time or more.